

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-30 as set forth below. Please add new claims 31-42 as set forth below.

1. (Currently amended) Industrial fabric comprising

a layer of batt of fibres ~~optionally needed to a base cloth, characterized in, that during manufacture of the fabric; and~~

a dispersion of particulate, polymeric material ~~has been applied to~~ in the layer of batt of fibres; and

wherein the dispersion of particulate, polymeric material is thermally activated to provide a discontinuous layer containing a mixture of batt fibres and a polymer-batt fibre matrix.

2. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~ The industrial fabric according to claim 1, ~~characterized in, that~~ wherein the discontinuous layer exists in x, y and z direction within the layer of batt structure ~~fibres.~~

3. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~ The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in, that~~ wherein the fabric with the discontinuous layer substantially has the same permeability as the fabric before applying ~~without~~ the discontinuous layer.

4. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~ The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in, that~~ wherein the discontinuous layer further comprises at least one of organic and/or inorganic matter.

5. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~ The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, ~~characterized in, that~~ wherein the at least one of the organic and/or inorganic matter is in the form of at least one of micro-fibres, or micro particles, or nano-particles, or alloy or blend.

6. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 4, characterized in, ~~that at least two of the~~ at least one of the organic and/or inorganic matters ~~having~~have at least one of different particle sizes, ~~and/or~~ different melting points, ~~and/or~~ different hardnesses from the particulate, polymeric material.
7. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in, ~~that~~wherein the thermal activation comprises at least one of heating and/or ~~applying~~and incident irradiation.
8. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~claim 7~~claim 1, characterized in, ~~that~~wherein the thermal activation affects at least one of a chemical reaction and/or ~~a~~ phase change.
9. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in, ~~that~~wherein the particulate polymeric material comprises at least one of a thermoplastic and/or ~~thermoset~~ thermoset particles.
10. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 9, characterized in, ~~that~~wherein the thermoplastic particles are thermoplastic elastomer particles, ~~preferably elatomeric polyurethane~~.
11. (Currently amended) ~~Industrial~~The industrial fabric according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 1, characterized in, ~~that~~wherein the industrial fabric is a paper machine clothing, preferably a forming fabric or a press felt or a dryer fabric.
12. (Currently amended) Method of making a industrial fabric comprising the following steps:—steps: applying a dispersion of particulate polymeric material to a batt of fibres, ~~whereby the batt being optionally needled to a base cloth,~~ thermally~~thermally~~ activating the dispersion of particulate polymeric material; ~~to bond the particulate material to the fibres and to provide a layer~~

wherein the activated dispersion of particulate polymeric material results in a layer.

13. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein the layer is a continuous polymer-batt fibre matrix layer.

14. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 13, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein more than 20% weight add on of polymeric material is applied.

15. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in, that~~ the layer is a discontinuous layer containing a mixture of batt fibres and a polymer-batt fibre matrix.

16. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 15, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein 0, 1% to 20% weight add on, ~~preferably 1 % to 5% weight add on~~ of polymeric material is applied.

17. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, ~~characterized in, that the~~wherein a diameter of the polymeric particles applied is in the range from 0,1 to 600 microns, ~~preferably in the range from 1 to 300 microns and ideally in the range from 20 to 150 microns.~~

18. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein the dispersion comprises at least one binder, and wherein the binder is in liquid and/or solid form.

19. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 18, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein the binder includes any of the following either alone or in combination : co-polyamides is at least one of co-polyamides, co-polyesters, PVA's, PU'sPVA, PVU and nitrile latex rubbers.

20. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 18 ~~or 19, characterized in, that wherein~~ the binder is included in an amount of 0,05% to 2%, ~~preferably in an amount of 0,1% to 0,5%~~ based on the dispersion volume.

21. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the dispersion comprises at least one viscosity modifier.

22. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 21, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the viscosity modifier ~~includes any of the following either alone or in combination :-~~ Newtonian is at least one of Newtonian, Pseudo-plastic and/or and strongly pseudo plastic types, based on PU, acrylic or PA's for water-borne systems, and guar or natural gums.

23. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 21 ~~or 22, characterized in, that wherein~~ the viscosity modifier is included in an amount of 0,05% to 5%, ~~preferably 0,1% to 2%~~, based on the dispersion volume.

24. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the dispersion comprises at least one anti-settling agent.

25. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 24, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the anti-settling agent is water soluble and further comprises at least one of a polyamide, and/or polyacrylate and/or and polyurethane.

26. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 25, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the anti-settling agent is included in an amount of 0,1% to 2%, ~~preferably 0,2% to 0,25%~~, based on the dispersion volume.

27. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, characterized in, ~~that wherein~~ the dispersion comprises at least one wetting agent.

28. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 27, ~~characterized in, that~~wherein the wetting agent includes at least one of: ~~surfactants,~~of a surfactant and ethoxylated ether.
29. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to claim 27 ~~or 28, characterized in,~~that wherein the wetting agent is included in an amount of 0,05% to 2%, ~~preferably 0,05% to 0,25%,~~ based on the dispersion volume.
30. (Currently amended) ~~Method~~The method according to ~~one of the preceding claims~~claim 12, ~~characterized in, that after the thermal activation the fabric is calendered~~further comprising the step of calendaring the fabric.
31. (New) The industrial fabric according to claim 10, wherein the thermoplastic elastomer particles are elastomeric polyurethane.
32. (New) The industrial fabric according to claim 11, wherein the paper machine clothing is one of a forming fabric, a press felt and a dryer fabric.
33. (New) The industrial fabric according to claim 1, wherein the layer of batt of fibres are needled to a base cloth.
34. (New) The method of making a industrial fabric of claim 12, further comprising the step of needling the batt to a base cloth.
35. (New) The method of making a industrial fabric of claim 12 wherein the thermal activation of the dispersion of particulate polymeric material bonds the particulate material to the fibres.
36. (New) The method according to claim 15, wherein 1 % to 5% weight add on of polymeric material is applied.

37. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein a diameter of the polymeric particles applied is in the range from 1 to 300 microns.

38. (New) The method according to claim 12, wherein a diameter of the polymeric particles applied is in the range from 20 to 150 microns.

39. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein the binder is included in an amount of 0, 1% to 0,5% based on the dispersion volume.

40. (New) The method according to claim 21, wherein the viscosity modifier is included in an amount of 0, 1% to 2% based on the dispersion volume.

41. (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein the anti-settling agent is included in an amount of 0,2% to 0,25% based on the dispersion volume.

42. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein the wetting agent is included in an amount of 0,05% to 0,25%, based on the dispersion volume.